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CHAPTER III

MATERIAL CULTURE

Habitations

34 In former times the Winnebago seem to have had eight types of lodges: The round lodge (*tci p'ârap'â'rate*), the long lodge (*tci se'rîte*), the tipi, the grass lodge, the gable lodge (*nâ"haitci p'â'rap'arate*), the platform lodge, the ceremonial lodge, and the sweat lodge. Of the round lodge and the long lodge there are three varieties—one made entirely of bark (pl. 18, *c*); another made entirely of reed mattings (pl. 18, *a*); and still another of bark with a roof covering of reed matting (pl. 18, *b*). The round and long lodges of all [343] three types are occasionally seen even now, rarely as habitations, however, but as storehouses (pl. 19). Gable lodges are no longer found among the Winnebago, but the writer has been informed that a few still exist among the Sauk and Fox living near Tama, Iowa.

34-3 The round and the long bark lodges are constructed in a very simple manner. These are built of poles of ironwood (*teatcâ'na*) driven into the ground, bent over and lashed to other poles which meet them from the opposite direction. The poles are tied together with basswood bark (*hi"cke'xunte*). The same material is used in attaching to these poles the cedar bark that forms the walls of the lodge. The walls are supported on the inside by a varying number of poles (*teicu' curutca"p*) attached to the corresponding poles of the other side. In many cases a series of transverse poles (*teicu' ŋa"jiŋk'ere*) are inserted beneath the exterior vertical poles. These can be seen in plate 18, *a*, *b*, *c*. The bark roofs are incased in frames made of irregularly distributed vertical poles with generally one transverse pole (pl. 18, *a*, *b*, *c*). If the roofs are of reed matting two or three of the external poles have poles attached to them which are arched across the matting (pl. 18 *a*, *b*, *c*). The reed matting lodges, as a rule, have no external vertical poles and only two transverse poles each, one on the outside and one on the inside (pl. 19, *c*).

[177] Although considered of Winnebago origin by many Indians, these bark and reed matting lodges are in all probability of Central Algonquian origin. They are easily constructed and for that reason were 000 generally used for temporary purposes in the olden times. Accord-

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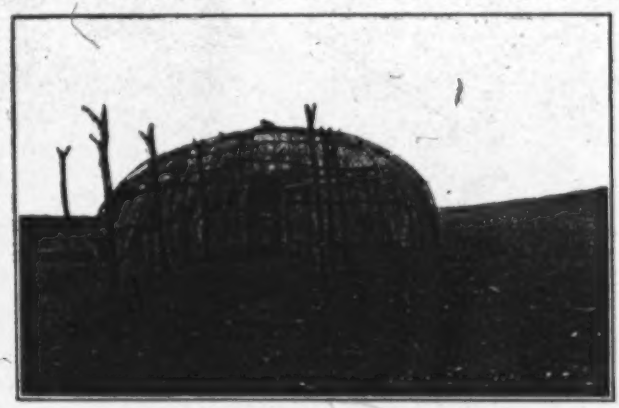

a. LODGE MADE OF BARK

b. MODERN LODGE WITH CANVAS COVERING

c. LODGE MADE OF REED MATTING

[Facing p. 104 (A)]

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According to the oldest informants, the earliest type of lodge used by the Winnebago was the ten-fire gable lodge, of which there were two types, rectangular in form, one built on a platform and the other on the ground. Poles of cedar, forked at the top, formed the sides. Through the forks transverse poles were laid to which the gable roof was attached. Three poles (*na"ji'k'erē*) were arranged in the center of the lodge for the better support of the roof. Beds were placed along both of the long sides on a platform raised 2 feet (*kaza'tc*). Frequently a platform 4 to 5 feet high was erected in the rear of the lodge and partitioned off. Here the favorite child of the family lived when he was fasting. In front of the lodge a spot was always kept carefully cleared (*nowazi'nera*). There were two doorways to the lodge. Often the entrances were shaded with boughs. According to some informants, this was only done for the chief's lodge. According to another description of the gable lodge, there were only two central poles, one at each entrance; these were always painted blue to symbolize the day (fig. 22, *b*).

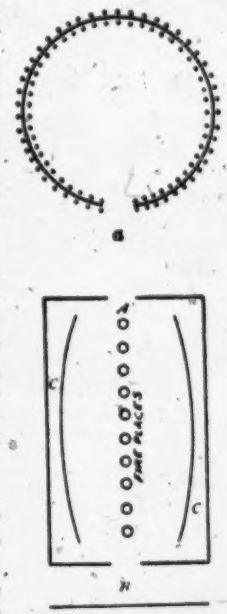

FIG. 22.—*a*, CROSS-SECTION OF ROUND LODGE; *b*, CROSS-SECTION OF GABLE LODGE.

As far as can be learned at the present time, the platform lodges were merely gable lodges on platforms. What purpose the platform served is now difficult to determine, but most Winnebago questioned said that it was provided as a protection against the dampness of the ground and insects.

The ceremonial lodge was merely a large, long bark lodge. The grass lodge seems to have been a roughly constructed round lodge with a covering of grass instead of bark. The sweat lodge was a round bark lodge having a framework of four poles. The tipi was of a simple type provided with a three-pole framework.

All the evidence obtained points to the fact that lodges of these types were used synchronously. According to the myths and the oldest informants, in ancient times a village occupied for a considerable period consisted entirely of gable lodges, but these seem to have given way to the round and long type, probably borrowed from the Central Algonquian. The gable type seems to have held its own, however, among the more western villages of the Winnebago. The round bark lodges were used in winter and the reed matting lodges in

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The menstrual lodge is never far from the lodge in which she lives. Indeed, it is within speaking distance, so that the occupants of her parents' lodge can hear her. All the utensils she uses are very small. The women stay from 4 to 10 days in the menstrual lodges. The older women stay out the shorter time because they are over it sooner. 841 343

It is said that if the young girls have any lovers they always come to the menstrual lodges at night. This is therefore the time for wooing. It is said that the girls cohabit with their lovers in these menstrual lodges. Those girls who have parents are attended by watchers, so that no unworthy men may visit them. They are especially guarded against ugly men, who are very likely to have love medicines. However, generally it is of no avail to struggle against such men, for they are invincible. [584 836] [832]

The women always take their blankets with them when they go to a menstrual lodge, for they never lie down but remain in a sitting posture, wrapped in their blankets. The women are always watched, so that when their menstrual flow comes everything is in readiness and lodge poles are placed around them and a lodge erected above their heads just about large enough to fit their body. They are not permitted to look upon the daylight nor upon any individual. If they were to look out during the day the weather would become very bad, and if they were to look at the blue sky it would become cloudy and rain. If they looked at anyone that person would become unfortunate. For four days they do not eat or drink anything; not even water do they drink. They fast all the time. Not even their own body do they touch with their hands. If they ever have any need of touching their bodies they use a stick. If they were to use their hands in touching their own body their bones would be attacked with fever. If they were to scratch their hands their heads would ache. After the fourth day they bathe in sight of their home. Then they return to their homes and eat. (This, of course, holds only for those whose menstrual flow ceases in four days.) If any women have to stay longer than four days they have to fast for that entire period. They always fast during this period and often some spirits bless them. When a woman who has stayed in the menstrual lodge for 10 days is ready to return to her lodge, she bathes herself and puts on an entirely new suit of clothes. Then her home is purified with red-cedar leaves and all the sacred bundles and medicines removed. Only then can she enter her parents' lodge. As soon as she returns to her parents' lodge after her first menstrual flow she is regarded as ready to be wooed and married. 841 [921] [831]

Thus the teacher of our customs, the Hare, has willed it. At a feast all the young girls nearing the age of puberty will be absent, but the old women, who have passed their climacteric, sit right next to the men, because they are considered the same as men as they have no menstrual flow any more. 581 825 886

If the Winnebago can be said to be afraid of any one thing it may be said it is this—the menstrual flow of women—for even the spirits die of its effects.

If the above account may be taken as a fairly accurate description of the customs connected with the menstrual lodge as they existed in former times, then one point must be regarded as of great interest, namely, that the women permitted their lovers to meet them there. So far as is known to the author, among other tribes having menstrual lodges it would have been considered a crime for any man to come near them. According to our informant the women were indeed guarded while they were in the menstrual lodges, but not so much to protect them against the intrusion of all men, as against the intrusion of unworthy men. From other information obtained, how- 831 841 not

§3. *Fasting*

*159 At this stage of life I secretly got the desire to make myself pleasing to the opposite sex.

[342] The Indians then lived in their old-fashioned lodges. Women, however, whenever they had their menses, [343] were placed in special huts. There the young men [841] would go to court them at night when their parents were *159 asleep. I used to go along with the men on such occa- 84 sions, for even although I did not enter any lodges but [584] merely accompanied the older men, I enjoyed it.

My parents were greatly in fear of my coming into contact with menstruating women so therefore I went with these men secretly. My parents were even afraid of having me cross the path over which a menstruating woman had passed. They worried so much about it at that time, because I was to fast as soon as autumn came. They did not wish me to be near menstruating women, for were I to grow up in their midst I would assuredly be weak and of little account. Such was their reason.

*159 Before long I started to fast again together with an 985 older brother of mine, both day and night. It was [221] during the fall moving, and several lodges of people were living near us. There it was that my elder brother and I fasted. Among the people of the other lodges [883] were four girls whose duty it was to carry wood.

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[787] and clairvoyance, and thinks they have had them for centuries. They use a long and
[346] large lodge a [blank] prepared for the purpose, in which all those allowed to witness the ceremonies are assembled. Adjoin-
● [343] ing this house is a bark tent built in a conical form as a steam house. They excavate a hole in the ground, heat large stones in a fire to a great heat, and then put them in this hole, and cover them over and seat the initiate over them. He is then covered around with blankets so that none of the steam may escape, after which water is poured on the stones and the neophyte is
[783] enveloped in a roasting steam bath. This is
[776] the first act, and the object is to steam all evil spirits out of him.

He is then led in to the house, after the steaming process in some instances has been repeated once or twice. He is then blindfolded and led around the house. Pres-
[534] ently the singers beat the drum, shake the rattles, and commence singing a tune; then commences the dance, which is joined in by all present who wish to do so. The wom-
[562] en are members of the medicine lodge as well as the men, and they join in the songs and in the dance. After the dancing is done, or perhaps he may have stood in the midst of it there is a suspension of all sing-
[756] ing and dancing. Several medicine men then advance towards the neophyte, pointing their medicine bags at him, then drawing them back. This advancing and receding and ejaculating certain words calculated to work up the mind of the novitiate into a regular phrenzy.

Presently they reach him when they hit their medicine bags against his body, he still being blindfolded and at the same time uttering a shrill exclamation. The Judge
[158] said the novitiate jumped up and fell flat on his face as if dead and that apparently with-